

# ARIZONA SENIOR FOOD PROGRAM

# Chapter One

## Eligibility Criteria

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### Overview

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#### Policy

Individuals applying for enrollment in the Arizona Senior Food Program must meet the following eligibility criteria before they can be certified to participate:

- Category
  - Residence
  - Income
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#### Dual Participation

Individuals who are currently participating in the Arizona Commodity Supplemental Food Program are not eligible for participation in the Arizona Senior Food Program.

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#### In this chapter

The requirements for categorical, residence and income eligibility will be discussed.

This chapter is divided into sections which detail categorical, residency and income requirements for eligibility.

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### Section A

#### Category

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#### Age

In order to participate in the Arizona Senior Food Program an applicant must be 60 years of age or older.

#### Documentation of Identity

An applicant is required to show documentation of identity that includes their birth date at the initial certification. Documentation type will be noted on the Client Registration screen of the AIM system.

Acceptable documentation includes but is not limited to:

At initial certification

- Passport
- Drivers License
- Birth Certificate
- Immunization Card
- Photo Identification (if it contains birth date)

At subsequent certification and pick-up

- Senior Food Program ID folder

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#### **Section B**

#### **Residence**

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**A potential participant must:**

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##### **Local Agency Service Area**

Reside in the local agency's service area as defined by the local agency Police and Procedure Manual.

Note: Tribal members who live on reservations that border on or are partially located in Arizona and who receive health services in Arizona are eligible for program participation.

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##### **Documentation of Residency**

Documentation of residency is required at each certification.

Acceptable forms of documentation include but are not limited to:

- Utility bill
- Rent or mortgage document
- Drivers license with current address

The type of documentation is recorded on the Family Information screen of the AIM system. An applicant with an appropriate reason for not having proof of residency, such as homeless, migrant, victim of loss, must sign a waiver (see Appendix X)

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### **Section C**

#### **Income**

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#### **Introduction**

In order to maintain program integrity, income documentation will be requested at each certification.

This section is divided in to three sub-sections which define income, income determination and income exclusions.

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### Section C1

#### Determining Household Size/Economic Unit

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##### **Definition**

Household is defined as a group of related or non-related individuals who are living together as one economic unit.

Household members share economic resources and consumption of goods and/or services. The term “economic unit” or “household size” can be used interchangeably. However, “economic unit” may be a more appropriate term to use because it conveys that familial relationship is not relevant to the determination of family size and income.

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##### **Co-living**

Two (2) separate families residing at the same address under the same roof may be considered separate households/economic units. The key is whether they share a “common income”. If each household has its own source of adequate income (rent, food, utilities, etc.), they are considered and evaluated as separate households/economic units.

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##### **Adopted Child**

When a child has been adopted by a family, the child is counted in the household size of the family.

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##### **Separated Family**

When a family separates, the child is counted in the family of the parent, grandparent or guardian with whom the child lives. Child support payments are considered income for the family with whom the child lives.

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##### **Custody**

The parents, grandparents or guardians with whom the child spends a majority of their time can claim the child in reporting household size. As stated above, all child support must be reported as income.

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#### **Section C2**

#### **Income Guidelines**

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An applicant will have income eligibility determined according to the following guidelines:

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#### **Date of Income Determination**

Determination of income eligibility will be made at the time of certification. The date of certification noted on the consent/release form and the identification folder/transfer card will be the date income eligibility as determined.

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#### **Income Standard**

The income standard for participation in the Arizona Senior Food Program is a household income equal to or less than 130% of the DHHS Poverty Guidelines.

All data used to determine income eligibility will be reflective of the applicant's total household income and the applicant's status at the time of certification.

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#### **Documentation**

All income reported must be confirmed by paper or an official verification system such as dial-up confirmation with AHCCCS. Photocopies are not required, but the source of income must be documented on the Client Registration screen of the AIM system. If documentation is not available on the day of certification, it must be provided within thirty (30) calendar days. In such a case, the applicant will receive one food box. If income documentation is not provided within the 30-day period, the applicant will be terminated. The number of household members is noted on the Client Registration screen of the AIM system.

Acceptable types of documentation include but are not limited to:

- Pay stubs
- W-2 form
- Income tax statement for the most recent calendar year
- Social Security Statement

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#### **Documentation (continued)**

If after exploring all possible income sources, the applicant cannot document income or declares no income exists; he/she must sign a statement to that effect. (See Appendix XX).

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#### **Adjunctive Eligibility**

Adjunctive eligibility occurs when an applicant, or in some cases, a family member is participating in a federal or state program with income guidelines that are equal to or below the Arizona Senior Food Program income guidelines. Such applicants are allowed to enroll in the program without duplicating the initial income screening process.

An applicant is adjunctively eligible for the Arizona Senior Food Program if documentation shows that the individual:

- is certified as fully eligible to receive benefits from the AHCCCS, TANF, or the USDA Food Stamp Program.
  - has applied for TANF, AHCCCS
  - is a member of a household containing either a TANF recipient or pregnant woman or infant on AHCCS.
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#### **Documentation of Adjunctive Eligibility**

The local agency will use income information appropriate to the circumstances of the applicant. The type of documentation will be noted on the Client registration screen of the AIM system.

Acceptable Documentation (eligibility dates must be included):

- TANF approval letter
  - AHCCCS decision letter
  - Food Stamps – most recent certification letter
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#### **Disqualification during a certification period**

Individuals may be disqualified during a certification period if a reassessment identifies that they are no longer income eligible or adjunctively income eligible. However, such persons cannot be disqualified from the program solely on the basis of cessation of benefits from TANF, AHCCCS, Food Stamps, or other State-administered programs. The individuals will then be reassessed under other income criteria before being disqualified.

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#### **Section C3**

##### **Gross Income Determination**

**Income** Gross cash income before deductions for income taxes, employee's social security taxes, insurance premiums, bonds, etc.

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##### **Income includes the following:**

**Wages** Monetary compensation for the services including wages, salary, commissions or fees.

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**Farm/Self-Employment** Income from farm and non-farm self-employment. This is net income (total dollars made in the business minus operating expenses) as calculated by schedule C or IRS form 1040 or a ledger of business operations.

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**Social Security** Check stub/award letter as documented by current bank statements.

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**Dividends  
Trusts/Rental  
Income** Dividends or interest on savings or bonds, income from estates or trusts, or net rental income as documented by federal income tax records for the most recent year.

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**Public Assistance** Public assistance or welfare payments (other than those listed below)

Note: Persons receiving AHCCCS, TAN, FDPIR, or Food Stamp benefits are automatically income eligible for the Senior Food Program.

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**Unemployment** Unemployment compensation as documented with approval letter or check stub.

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#### **Retirement/ Pensions/ Annuities**

Government civilian employee or military retirement or pension or veteran's payments. Private pensions or annuities. Documentation includes income tax return for the most recent calendar year.

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#### **Alimony and Child Support**

Alimony and child support payments. Child support payments are considered income for the family with whom the child lives, but cannot be deducted from the income of the person making the payments.

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#### **Contributions**

Regular contributions from persons not living in the household. Appropriate documentation would be a letter from the person contributing resources to the household.

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#### **Royalties**

Net royalties.

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#### **Other Cash Income**

Other cash income includes, but is not limited to, cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source, including savings, investments, trust accounts, and other resources which are readily available to the household.

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#### **Lump Sum Payments**

Lump sum payments that represent "new money" that is intended for income is counted as income. Lump sum payments include gifts, inheritances, lottery winnings, worker's compensation for lost income, severance pay and insurance payments for "pain and suffering". Lump sum payments for winnings and proceeds from gaming, gambling, and bingo are also counted as income. Lump sum payments may be counted as annual income or may be divided by 12 to estimate a monthly income, whichever is most applicable.

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### **Section C4**

#### **Income Exclusions**

**Income exclusions include but are not limited to the following:**

**In-kind/non-cash benefits**

Any benefit, which is of a value, which is not provided in the form of cash, is considered an in-kind benefit and is not counted as income.

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**Federal Program Benefits**

Benefits provided under the following Federal Programs or acts include but are not limited to:

Reimbursements for the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended in 1987.

Any payment to volunteers under Title I (Volunteers in Service of America (VISTA) and others or Title II (Retired Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP), Senior Companions Program (S.P.), Foster Grandparents Program, and others of the Domestic Volunteer Services Act of 1973, to the extent excluded by the act.

Payment to volunteers under Section 8(b)(1) of the Small Business Act Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) and the Active Corps Executives (ACE).

Payment received under the Job Training Partnership Act (Adult and Youth Training Program, dislocated Worker Programs, Programs for Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers, Veterans and the Job Corps).

Payments under the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Act, payments under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, as amended by the Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance amendments of 1989.

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The value of assistance to children their families under the National School Lunch Act, as amended, the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Food Stamp Act of 1977, including benefits from the:

- National School Lunch Program
- Special Milk Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Child and Adult Care Program
- Food Stamp Program
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

Student financial assistance received from any program funded in whole or part under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 which is used by the student for tuition, fees, books, materials, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses related to the student's education. The student must be attending the educational institution on at least a half-time basis as determined by the institution. (This does not include room and board and dependent care expenses.)

Assistance includes:

- Pell Grants
- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
- State Student Incentive Grants
- National Direct Student Loans

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#### **Federal Program Benefits continued**

- College Work Study
- Byrd Honor Scholarship programs
- Payments pursuant to the Agent Orange Compensation Exclusion Act
- Payments received for Wartime Relocation of Civilians under the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (e.g. for those in Japanese internment camps.)

The value of any child care payments made under section 402 (g)(1)(E) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Family Support Act, including:

- Title IV-A Child Care Program
- JOBS Child Care Program

The value of any “at risk” block grant child care payments made under section 5081 of Public Law 101-508, which amended section 402(I) of the Social Security Act.

The value of any child care provided or paid for under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, as amended.

Mandatory salary reduction amount for military personnel, which is used to fund the Veteran’s Educational Assistance Act of 1984, as amended.

Payments received under the Old Age Assistance Claims Act, except for per capita shares in excess of \$2,000.

Payments received under the Cranston-Gonzales National Affordable Housing Act, unless the income of the family equals or exceeds 80% of the median income in the area.

Payments received under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987, unless the income of the family increases at any time to more than 49% of the median income of the area.

Benefits received through the Farmers Market Demonstration Project under Section 17(M)(7)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended.

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#### **Bank Loans**

Loans, such as bank loans, are not counted as income.

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#### **Lump Sum/Large Cash Payments**

Lump sum payments or large cash settlements (e.g., compensation for a loss such as an insurance settlement to pay for damage to a house or car). Also includes payments that are intended for a third party to pay for a specific expense (e.g., payment for medical bills resulting from an accident or injury.)

If the lump sum payment is put in a savings account and the household regularly draws from that account for living expenses, the amount withdrawn is counted as income.

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#### **Income of / payments to Native**

States, which is held in trust for certain tribes.

Payments for relocation assistance for Navajo and Hopi tribal members

Payments to the Blackfeet, Groventre and Assiniboine tribes (Montana) and the Tohono O'odham Nation, a.k.a. Papago tribe (Arizona).

Payments to the Red Lake Band of Chippewas, the Chippewas of Mississippi, and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewas (Arizona).

Income derived from the disposition of funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians.

Payments received under the Program for Native Americans.

Payments to the Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot nation or any of their members, received pursuant to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980.

Payments received under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Payments received under the Sac and Fox Indian Claims Agreement.

Payments received under the Judgment Award Authorization Act, as amended.

Payments received under the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan Distribution of Judgment Funds Act.

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**Income of/  
payments to  
Native  
Americans  
Continued**

Payments to the Assinboine tribe of the Fort Belknap Indians  
Community and the Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Peck Indian  
Reservations (Montana).